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PAGE 01 BONN 18765 01 OF 03 171748Z

73

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SUBJECT: THE SPD NATIONAL CONVENTION, NOV 11-15, 1975

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PAGE 02 BONN 18765 01 OF 03 171748Z

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BEGIN SUMMARY: THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS DISPLAYED A REMARKABLE DEGREE OF SOLIDARITY AND UNITY AT THEIR "BUNDESPARTEITAG" IN MANNHEIM, NOV 11-15. THE DELEGATES RE-ELECTED WILLY BRANDT AS PARTY CHAIRMAN AND CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT AS DEPUTY PARTY CHAIRMAN WITH THE SAME NUMBER OF VOTES (I.E., 407). THIS WAS IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THE LAST NATIONAL CONVENTION IN HANNOVER (1973) WHEN SCHMIDT RECEIVED ONLY 286 VOTES. BREMEN BUERGERMEISTER KOSCHNICK WAS ELECTED AS THE OTHER VICE CHAIRMAN REPLACING HEINZ KUEHN. THE CONVENTION APPROVED THE LONG RANGE SPD PROGRAM (OR 85), REJECTED LEFT-WING PROPOSALS FOR INCREASED GOVERNMENT CONTROLS OVER THE ECONOMY AND VOTED AGAINST EXPANDING FRG ARMS SALES. THE DELEGATES ELECTED A NEW PARTY EXECUTIVE BOARD WHICH IS WEIGHTED IN FAVOR OF THE RIGHT-CENTER ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PARTY. THE RESTRAINT SHOWN BY THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS (JUSOS) AND THE LEFT-WING IN GENERAL WAS THE RESULT, AT LEAST IN PART, OF THE WARNINGS FROM BRANDT AND SCHMIDT ABOUT THE NEED FOR UNITY IF THE SPD IS TO WIN NEXT YEAR'S BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS. THE CONVENTION WAS A SUCCESS FOR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND A PERSONAL VICTORY FOR HELMUT SCHMIDT. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING IN THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG INDUSTRIAL CITY OF MANNHEIM, THE SPD "BUNDESPARTEITAG" DISPLAYED A REMARKABLE DEGREE OF SOLIDARITY, ESPECIALLY FOR A PARTY THAT IS PRONE TO CARRYING OUT BLOODY IN-FIGHTING IN PUBLIC. HARDLY A LONG-HAIRED DELEGATE WAS TO BE SEEN, AND ALMOST ALL THE 400 DELEGATES WERE DRESSED IN SUITS, SHIRTS AND TIES. DISCIPLINE, SOLIDARITY AND UNITY WERE SO MUCH IN EVIDENCE AS TO MAKE THE MEETING SOMEWHAT BORING COMPARED TO PAST SPD CONVENTIONS.

2. THE "GETTING IT ALL TOGETHER" MOOD OF THE CONVENTION WAS NO ACCIDENT. BOTH PARTY CHAIRMAN BRANDT AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT IN THEIR OPENING SPEECHES WARNED AGAINST THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISUNITY AND INTERNAL SQUABBLING FOR THE 1976 ELECTIONS. IN AN UNCHARACTER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BONN 18765 01 OF 03 171748Z

ISTICALLY TOUGH SPEECH, BRANDT OPENLY CRITICIZED THE JUSOS. THE SPD, HE SAID, HAD GREAT PATIENCE, BUT THE PARTY WOULD NOT PERMIT ITSELF TO BE HOBbled WITH CHILDISH IDEAS (E.G., JUSO CHAIRMAN WIECZOREK-ZEUL'S PROPOSAL TO LIMIT INDIVIDUAL INCOME TO \$2,000 A MONTH). "THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE JUSOS," BRANDT STATED, "DOES NOT SPEAK FOR THE SPD."

3. SPEAKING THE NEXT DAY, SCHMIDT STRESSED THAT THE SPD WAS FRIENDLY TO PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND WARNED SPD MEMBERS AGAINST TALKING OVER THE HEADS OF THE VOTERS. THE PARTY, HE SAID, MUST BRING ITSELF CLOSER TO THE AVERAGE CITIZEN. AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS SPEECH, SCHMIDT SAID, HE ACCEPTED THE DESCRIPTION OF HIMSELF AS A PRAGMATIST--"BUT," HE SAID, "A PRAGMATIST NOT WITHOUT THEORY AND CERTAINLY NOT WITHOUT VALUES." HE ADMITTED THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WERE DIFFERENCES IN TEMPERAMENT AND PERSONALITY, THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SPD SHARED 30 YEARS OF COMMON STRUGGLE FOR SPD GOALS, AND HE PLEDGED THAT TOGETHER WITH BRANDT AND WEHNER THEY WOULD FIGHT WITH ALL THEIR STRENGTH FOR GERMANY.

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PAGE 01 BONN 18765 02 OF 03 171754Z

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 18765

4. BOTH SPEAKERS LASHED OUT AT THE CDU/CSU OPPOSITION BRANDT CALLING THE OPPOSITION A "SECURITY RISK" FOR THE FRG AND SCHMIDT STATING THAT THE OPPOSITION HAD PROVEN ITSELF "UNFIT TO GOVERN." THE OPPOSITION LEADERS RE-ACTED SHARPLY. STRAUSS SAID THAT BRANDT HAD RUN AMUCK IN HIS SPEECH AND KOHL ACCUSED THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 BONN 18765 02 OF 03 171754Z

POISONING THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE.

5. SCHMIDT HAD KIND WORDS FOR THE FDP AND CALLED FOR FAIR PLAY AND COOPERATION IN REACHING COMPROMISE ON ISSUES WHERE THE COALITION PARTNERS DO NOT FULLY AGREE (E.G., INDUSTRIAL CODETERMINATION). CALLING FOR PATIENCE IN ACHIEVING SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOALS, HE QUOTED A CHINESE PROVERB: "FEAR NOT GOING SLOWLY, FEAR ONLY STANDING STILL."

6. THE DELEGATES HEEDED THE LEADERSHIP'S CALL FOR UNITY AND EVEN THE JUSO LEADERS DID NOT RESPOND PUBLICLY TO BRANDT'S CRITICISM. THE DRAFT LONG TERM SPD PROGRAM (OR 85) WHICH HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD WAS APPROVED WITH ONLY MINOR CHANGES. PROPOSALS FOR GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND SOCIALIZATION OF BANKS, ETC. WERE VOTED DOWN BY THE MAJORITY OF THE DELEGATES. THEY ALSO TURNED ASIDE A PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE LIMITED THE FREEDOM OF THE SPD NEGOTIATORS IN REACHING A COMPROMISE WITH THE FDP ON INDUSTRIAL CODETERMINATION.

7. THE SOLIDARITY OF THE "PARTEITAG" WAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED IN THE ELECTIONS FOR CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN. CONTRARY TO RUMORS THAT THE RIGHT WING WAS GOING TO WITHHOLD VOTES FROM BRANDT, HE WAS RE-ELECTED WITH 407 VOTES OUT OF A POSSIBLE 418 (9 NO VOTES AND 2 ABSTENTIONS). FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULT OF BRANDT'S RE-ELECTION, THE DELEGATES VOTED FOR THE TWO VICE CHAIRMEN. THE RANK AND FILE WENT WILD WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT SCHMIDT HAD ALSO RECEIVED 407 VOTES (OUT OF A POSSIBLE 429, 14 VOTED AGAINST HIM AND 8 DELEGATES ABSTAINED).

8. SCHMIDT'S SUCCESS IN BUILDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AMONG PARTY MEMBERS IS CLEAR FROM THE COMPARISON OF HIS 1975 VOTE OF 407 WITH THE 286 VOTES HE RECEIVED AS VICE CHAIRMAN CANDIDATE AT THE 1973 HANNOVER CONVENTION. THE PARITY IN THE BRANDT-SCHMIDT VOTES LED TO THE JOKE AMONG THE DELEGATES THAT THE SOVIETS WERE DISPATCHING A SPECIAL EMISSARY TO STUDY HOW TO OBTAIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BONN 18765 02 OF 03 171754Z

SUCH "PERFECT ELECTION RESULTS" WITHOUT USING FORCE. KOSCHNICK WAS ELECTED AS THE OTHER VICE CHAIRMAN (391 VOTES) WHICH PUTS HIM IN THE RUNNING AS A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO EITHER BRANDT OR SCHMIDT. THE RHINELAND-PALATINATE SPD CHAIRMAN DROESCHER WAS ELECTED AS PARTY TREASURER (410 VOTES) TO REPLACE RETIRING ALFRED NAU.

9. THE ELECTION OF THE PARTY "VORSTAND" (EXECUTIVE BOARD) PROVIDED THE ONLY REAL EXCITEMENT AT THE CONVENTION. DAILY, THE LEFT AND RIGHT WINGS CAUCUSED (IN MANNHEIM AND ACROSS THE RIVER IN LUDWIGSHAFEN) TO PLAN STRATEGY. DESPITE THREATS AND COUNTER-THREATS OF FORCING EACH OTHER OUT OF THE "VORSTAND" THE RESULT WAS A COMPROMISE. A ROUGH BREAK-DOWN OF THE NEW "VORSTAND" INDICATES THAT 24 OF THE MEMBERS CAN BE CONSIDERED RIGHT-CENTER AND 12 LEFTWINGERS.

10. THE "VORSTAND" ELECTION, HOWEVER, WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS DISAPPOINTMENTS FOR SOME. THE ACID-TONGUED SPD FRAKTION CHAIRMAN HERBERT WEHNER WAS RE-ELECTED BUT WITH 64 VOTES LESS THAN IN HANNOVER. MINISTER PRESIDENTOSSWALD WAS NOT RE-ELECTED, PRIMARILY BECAUSE HE HAD NEITHER RIGHT NOR LEFT-WING SUPPORT, PARTLY BECAUSE OF HIS LACKLUSTER PERFORMANCE AS HEAD OF THE SPD IN THE 1974 HESSE "LANDTAG" ELECTIONS. HEINZ RUHNAU WAS ALSO DUMPED BECAUSE HE AND FELLOW-HAMBURGER, KLOSE, DIVIDED THE RIGHT-WING VOTE. ONE SURPRISE WAS THAT DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER, WHO HAD BEEN UNDER HEAVY ATTACK BY THE LEFTISTS IN THE PARTY, WAS NOT ONLY RE-ELECTED TO THE "VORSTAND" (AS EXPECTED) BUT RECEIVED MORE VOTES THAN HE HAD IN HANNOVER TWO YEARS AGO.

11. ALTHOUGH FOREIGN POLICY, PER SE, DID NOT PLAY A MAJOR ROLE AT THE "PARTEITAG" THERE WAS WIDE SCALE REPRESENTATION FROM SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST PARTIES OF 38 COUNTRIES. AMONG THE MORE PROMINENT GUESTS WERE AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR KREISKY, NORWEGIAN AND DUTCH PRIME MINISTERS TRYGVE BRATTELI AND JOOP DEN UYL

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PAGE 01 BONN 18765 03 OF 03 172104Z

73

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 3 OF 3 BONN 18765

AS WELL AS ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON AND GREEK
OPPOSITION LEADER MAVROS. PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER
SOARES COULD NOT ATTEND AT THE LAST MOMENT BECAUSE OF
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AT HOME. ANSELMO SULE, CHAIR-
MAN OF THE CHILEAN RADICAL PARTY, SALGADO ZENHA, POR-
TUGUESE FINANCE MINISTER AND--AFTER SOME DIFFICULTIES
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PAGE 02 BONN 18765 03 OF 03 172104Z

IN OBTAINING AN EXIT VISA--FELIPE GONZALES, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE SPANISH WORKERS PARTY (DPSOE), ATTENDED THE CONVENTION. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE REPRESENTATIVES FROM EGYPT, ALGERIA, MOROCCO, YUGOSLAVIA, AS WELL AS LATIN AMERICANS AND AFRICANS.

12. THE ROUND TABLE MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN GUESTS, WHICH WAS CHAIRED BY BRANDT, WAS AN EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE SPD TO BROADEN CONTACTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY WITH FRATERNAL PARTIES SHARING ITS VIEWS ALTHOUGH NOT REPRESENTED IN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. THE "PARTEITAG" PASSED RESOLUTIONS SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN CHILE, PORTUGAL AND SPAIN. (THE EMBASSY WILL REPORT SEPARATELY THIS INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY AT THE CONVENTION.)

13. DESPITE THE CHARGE, WHICH IN PART IS VALID, THAT THE MANNHEIM CONVENTION WAS "STAGEMANAGED" DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL, THE DEMONSTRATION OF PARTY SOLIDARITY AND DISCIPLINE WAS EXTREMELY IMPRESSIVE. MUCH OF THE CREDIT FOR THIS BELONGS TO HERBERT WEHNER'S EFFORTS BEHIND THE SCENES. THIS WAS ESPECIALLY VIVID IN CONTRAST TO THE RECENT PUBLIC FEUDING BETWEEN THE CDU AND THE CSU.

14. BOTH SCHMIDT'S AND BRANDT'S PERFORMANCE INSPIRED THE RANK AND FILE. THEY ARE MAKING THE ELECTION INTO AN SPD VS. FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS CONTEST IN AN EFFORT TO SPUR THE PARTY WORKERS ON FOR THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THEY GIVE ALL INDICATIONS THAT THE CAMPAIGN WILL BE TOUGH AND AGGRESSIVE.

15. THE SO-CALLED "GENOSSENTREND" OF SOLIDARITY, UNITY AND DISCIPLINE IS NOT GUARANTEED TO LAST FOR THE NEXT 11 MONTHS. MANY OF THE DEEP DIVISIONS EXISTING WITHIN THE SPD WERE ONLY PAPERED OVER AT MANNHEIM. BRANDT HAS PROPOSED A SPECIAL BUNDESPARTEITAG IN DORTMUND NEXT JUNE. AT THAT TIME THE STATE OF THE PARTY AND THE STATE OF THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN THE FRG ON THE EVE OF THE ELECTIONS WILL BE MORE DISCERN-
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PAGE 03 BONN 18765 03 OF 03 172104Z

IBLE. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT SCHMIDT, BRANDT AND THE SPD EMERGED FROM THE MANNHEIM CONVENTION IN BETTER SHAPE THAN ANYONE WOULD HAVE PREDICTED A FEW WEEKS

AGO.
HILLENBRAND

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